

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1 - 14 and add new claims 15 - 27 in accordance with the following:

15. (NEW) A Pockels cell driver circuit, comprising
- a first circuit node (SK1) to be connected with a first connector of the Pockels cell (CP) and a second circuit node (SK2) to be connected with a second connector of the Pockels cell (CP), wherein
 - the first circuit node (SK1) is connected with a first potential via a first switch (S1), and
 - the second circuit node (SK2) is connected with the first potential via a second switch (S2), wherein
 - both said circuit nodes (SK1, SK2) are connected with a second potential (HV) via a recharging resistor (R1, R2), respectively, and
 - only one (SK2) of the said circuit nodes (SK1, SK2) or both said circuit nodes (SK1, SK2) are connected with the second potential (HV) via a further switch (S2B), respectively.
16. (NEW) A Pockels cell driver circuit, comprising
- a first circuit node (SK1) to be connected with a first connector of the Pockels cell (CP) and a second circuit node (SK2) to be connected with a second connector of the Pockels cell (CP), wherein
 - the first circuit node (SK1) is connected with a first potential via a first switch (S1), and
 - the second circuit node (SK2) is connected with the first potential via a second switch (S2), wherein
 - one of the said circuit nodes (SK1, SK2) is connected with a second potential (HV) via a recharging resistor, and the other one of the said circuit nodes (SK1, SK2) is connected with the second potential (HV) via a further switch.

17. (NEW) A Pockels cell driver circuit, comprising
 - a first circuit node (SK1) to be connected with a first connector of the Pockels cell (CP) and a second circuit node (SK2) to be connected with a second connector of the Pockels cell (CP), wherein
 - the first circuit node (SK1) is connected with a first potential via a first switch (S1), and
 - the second circuit node (SK2) is connected with the first potential via a second switch (S2), wherein
 - both said circuit nodes (SK1, SK2) are connected with a second potential (HV) via a switch (S1B, S2B), respectively.
18. (NEW) The Pockels cell driver circuit according to one of the claims 15 to 17, wherein
 - low voltage control signals individually control each of the three or four switches (S1A, S1B, S2A, S2B) of the circuit.
19. (NEW) The Pockels cell driver circuit according to one of the claims 15 to 17, wherein
 - only two control signals (ON, OFF) control all three or four switches (S1A, S1B, S2A, S2B) such that one of the control signals (ON) induces voltage to be applied to the Pockels cell and the other control signal (OFF) induces the removal of voltage from the Pockels cell.
20. (NEW) A System comprising a Pockels cell and a Pockels cell driver circuit according to one of the claims 15 to 17 connected thereto.
21. (NEW) A pulse laser system and a system according to claim 20 for the optical switching of laser pulses.
22. (NEW) The pulse laser system according to claim 21, wherein the pulse laser system comprises a pulsed laser source (1) having a laser resonator, wherein the Pockels cell (2) is arranged internally or externally to the laser resonator.
23. (NEW) The pulsed laser system according to one of claims 21 or 22, wherein the pulsed laser system comprises a pulsed laser source (1) and an optical amplifier (4).

24. (NEW) The pulsed laser system according to claim 23, wherein the system according to claim 20 is contained within the optical amplifier (4).

25. (NEW) The pulsed laser system according to one of claims 22 or 23, wherein a further system according to claim 20 is contained within the optical amplifier (4).

26. (NEW) An optical pump-/probe method by using a pulsed laser system according to one of claims 21 to 25, in which method

- an optical excitation pulse and a delayed optical monitoring pulse are directed onto a medium, wherein
- a signal induced by the delayed monitoring pulse is measured as a function of delay between the two pulses, wherein
- the pulse sequence of excitation and monitoring pulses and the delay from one to another is determined by the Pockels cell and the driver circuit of the Pockels cell.

27. (NEW) A material processing method by using a system according to anyone of claims 21 to 25, in which method

- a first laser pulse is directed onto the material surface such that a plasma is generated at the surface, and
- after some delay a number of further laser pulses is directed onto the plasma above the surface of the material, whereby
- the pulse sequence of the first laser pulse and the number of further laser pulses and the delay between these laser pulses is determined by the Pockels cell and the driver circuit of the Pockels cell.